

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 SAM-01 SAB-01 IO-14

AID-20 DRC-01 IGA-02 CU-05 CG-00 DOTE-00 EB-11 OMB-01

TRSE-00 /158 W

----- 087327

O P 101120Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 1492

INFO SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

CNO WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK PRIORITY

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 0723

SECDEF FOR ISA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : MARR, EAID, BA, US

SUBJECT : RETAINING MIDDLE EAST FORCE IN BAHRAIN

1. CMEF ADMIRAL HANKS, CHIEF OF STAFF AND I MET LATE SEPT. 9 WITH DEVELOPMENT MINISTER SHIRAWI FOR FIRST SESSION ON ADJUSTMENTS TO MIDEASTFOR LEASE ARRANGEMENTS. SHIRAWI, FLUSHED FROM A DAY OF APPARENTLY LUCRATIVE BAR-GAINING WITH BAPCO OVER "PARTICIPATION" PAYMENTS, WAS AT HIS SHREWDEST AND DRAMATIC BEST, BUT THERE WAS RING OF CONVICTION TO HIS COMMENTS.

2. HE INTRODUCED IMMEDIATELY OUR RESPONSE ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, CHARACTERIZING PROPOSED REIMBURSABLE AGREEMENT AS "COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE", SO UNRESPONSIVE AS TO BE "EMBARRASSING TO DISCUSS IN CABINET". HE ASKED RHETORICALLY WHY GOB SHOULD PAY USG IN FULL FOR AMERICAN ADVISORS WITH ALL THE PRIVILEGES OF DIPLOMATS WHEN FOR "LESS COST" IT COULD HIRE
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AMERICANS DIRECTLY AND HAVE "LOYAL" ADVISORS. WHEN I

REMINDED SHIRAWI PROPOSED AGREEMENT PROVIDED "HALF" OF WHAT GOB WANTS, I.E., U.S. ASSISTANCE IN RECRUITING QUALIFIED ADVISORS AND VISIBLE PRESENCE U.S. OFFICIALS PARTICIPATING IN BAHRAIN'S DEVELOPMENT, HE GOT DOWN TO BUSINESS.

3. ACCORDING SHIRAWI, OUR VARIOUS OFFERS TO BE HELPFUL WHERE WE CAN IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, I.E., COAST GUARD TRAINING, CU GRANTS, ETC., ARE APPRECIATED AND WILL BE CONSIDERED SERIOUSLY BUT DO NOT MEET ESSENTIAL GOB NEED. LITANY FOLLOWED, CHANTED AS USUAL WITH EVIDENT SINCERITY: WHAT GOB WANTS IS PRESENCE "10-15" TOP FLIGHT AMERICAN EXPERTS FOR ROUGHLY TWO YEAR STINTS WORKING WITH BAHRAINI COUNTERPARTS. GOB WANTS TO SELECT AREAS WHERE HELP NEEDED, FOR EXAMPLE, HEALTH SERVICES, CITY PLANNING. GOB WANTS TO "PAY ITS SHARE", UNDER ARRANGEMENT SUCH AS IT HAS WITH BRITISH IN WHICH GOB WOULD DETERMINE APPROPRIATE LOCAL CIVIL SERVICE GRADE OF AMERICAN ADVISOR, PAY THAT AMOUNT AND USG WOULD PICK UP REST OF COST. (COMMENT: ROUGHLY THIS MEANS U.S. PAYS TWO-THIRDS). SINCE BAHRAIN HAS "PLENTY OF MONEY" WHY DOES IT NEED U.S. HELP IN PAYING FOR ADVISORS? FIRST, BECAUSE AMERICAN EXPERTS COST MORE THAN GOB CAN JUSTIFY IN SOCIETY WITH PUBLIC BUDGET AND ELECTED LEGISLATURE. MORE IMPORTANT, GOB DESPERATELY NEEDS EVIDENCE U.S. WILLINGNESS TO EXPAND COOPERATION IN CIVIL DEVELOPMENT AREA. THIS NEED PARTICULARLY ACUTE IF GOB IS TO BE ABLE TO JUSTIFY TO PUBLIC

DECISION TO RETAIN MIDEASTFOR ON BASIS U.S. NAVY PRESENCE HERE IS BUT AN ASPECT OF BROADER AND DEVELOPING U.S.- BAHRAINI COOPERATION. BAHRAINI PUBLIC, INCLUDING NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, WILL ASK GOVERNMENT "WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF LETTING U.S. NAVY STAY". SURE GOB COULD TRY TO HIKE NAVY'S RENT TO COVER COST OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BUT THIS IS NOT POLITICALLY DESIRABLE. GOB WANTS NAVY TO PAY RENT WHICH CAN BE JUSTIFIED ON "COMMERCIAL BASIS" -- NO MORE, NOHLESS. HELP WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE ENTIRELY SEPARATE, AND NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO NAVY PRESENCE.

4. WE REHASHED U.S. STATUTORY AND BUDGETARY PROBLEMS WITH "SALARY TOPPING" FOR TECHNICAL ADVISORS. I EXPLAINED TO SHIRAQ THAT THERE IS MUCH SXPATY IN OFFICIAL WASHCGTON FOR DESIRABILITY PROVIDING "SALARY TOPPING" FOR COUNTRIES

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LIKE BAHRAIN. NOTED ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON'S RECENT TESTIMONY BEFORE HAMILTON SUB-COMMITTEE IN THIS REGARD. PROBLEM IS WHETHER, HOW AND WHEN TO APPROACH CONGRESS FOR FUNDS. WOULD NOT REQUEST FOR "SALARY TOPPING" FOR BAHRAIN SET OFF CONGRESSIONAL DISCUSSION OF MIDEASTFOR PRESENCE, WHICH GOB WOULD FIND MOST PAINFUL? HOW WOULD U.S. CONGRESS REACT TO REQUEST FOR BISALARY TOPPING"FOR GULF OIL STATES GENERALLY AND THIS STAGE INWORLD ENERGY/FINANCE PROBLEMS? WHAT ASSISTANCE COULD

GOB REASONABLY EXPECT THAT USG COULD
OBTAIN SALARY TOPPING AUTHORITY AND FUNDS ON WORLDWIDE
BASIS IN NEAR FUTURE?

5. SHIRAWI INDICATED HE UNDERSTOOD PROBLEM AND WOULD
LAY IT BEFORE PRIME MINISTER. SHIRAWI STRESSED HIS REMARKS
HAD BEEN TENTATIVE. AT SAME TIME HE INDICATED GOB DETER-
MINED TO CONTINUE DIALOG WITH USG ON "SALARY TOPPING" AND
MIGHT, FOR INSTANCE, RAISE QUESTION WITH SECRETARY OF NAVY
SEPT. 10. I MADE POINT OF MENTIONING PROPOSED USG AID FOR
"EGYPT, SYRIA, AND ISRAEL" AND COMPARING IT TO ROUGHLY
\$500,000 PER YEAR. BAHRIAN WANTS FROM US.

6. AS CMEF REPORTING SEPARATELY, SHIRAWI BARELY GOT INTO
RENT QUESTION, NOTED HE WOULD COME UP WITH ASKING PRICE
IN NEXT FEW DAYS AFTER TALKING WITH PRIME MINISTER.

7. COMMENT: THIS WAS PRELIMINARY SESSION BEFORE SERIOUS
BARGAINING BEGINS. GOB OBVIOUSLY AWARE OF RELATIONSHIP
BEFORE
RENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COSTS. AT SAME TIME
GOB HAS REAL PROBLEM IN SHOWING PUBLIC WHAT USG DOES TO
COOPERATE WITH BAHRAIN OTHER THAN STATION NAVY HERE ON
"COMMERCIAL" RENTAL BASIS. SINCE SHIRAWI RECONFIRMED
GOB DESIRE TO WRAP UP MIDEAST FOR QUESTION BY END OF SEPT.
WE MAY SEE, AND SHOULD WELCOME, GOB ATTEMPT TO CUT TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE QUESTION OUT OF "MIDEAST FOR PACKAGE", LEAVING IT
FOR LATER DISCUSSION AFTER MAKING CERTAIN RENT IS HIGH
ENOUGH TO COVER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COSTS GOB LIKELY TO
INCUR. WHILE SUCH A DEAL MIGHT SETTLE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM
OF MIDEAST FOR STATUS, IT IS UNLIKELY TO GET US OFF THE
HOOK ON "SALARY TOPPING", AND GOB WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS
FOR ARRANGEMENT IT REGARDS AS IN INTERESTS BOTH BAHRAIN
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AND U.S. OUR EVENTUAL RESPONSIVENESS WILL OF COURSE
INFLUENCE FUTURE GOB RECEPTIVENESS TO NAVY PRESENCE,
AND TO EXPANDED COMMERCIAL RELATIONS WITH US.
TWINAM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, WAGES, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, MILITARY BASE AGREEMENTS, CONSULTANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MANAMA00723
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740251-0660
From: MANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740960/aaaabyqn.tel
Line Count: 158
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kelleyw0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 JUN 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <10 MAR 2003 by kelleyw0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: : RETAINING MIDDLE EAST FORCE IN BAHRAIN
TAGS: MARR, EAID, BA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005